



# Sam Brownback

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## News Release

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## **SILK ROAD LEGISLATION PASSES U.S. SENATE TONIGHT**

WASHINGTON -- The U. S. Senate tonight passed the Silk Road legislation authored by U.S. Sen. Sam Brownback as a part of the Foreign Operations Appropriations Bill (S. 1234).

"This is the culmination of two years' hard work," Brownback said. "This bill will help the U.S. implement regionally-based policies which will help maintain the stability, independence and sovereignty of the countries of the South Caucasus and Central Asia," Brownback said.

The Silk Road Strategy legislation provides an overarching policy for the U.S. with regards to the countries of the South Caucasus and Central Asia. It authorizes assistance in a gamut of areas and is intended to safeguard U.S. national interests in the region:

- 1) to promote sovereignty, independence with democratic government
- 2) to promote tolerance, pluralism, and understanding and counter-racism and anti-semitism
- 3) to assist actively in the resolution of regional conflicts
- 4) to promote friendly relations and economic cooperation
- 5) to help promote market-oriented principles and practices
- 6) to assist in the development of infrastructure necessary for communications, transportation, and energy and trade on an East-West axis
- 7) to support U.S. business interests and investments in the region

"There is still work left to be done, however, as we were unable to pass a waiver for Section 907 of the Freedom Support Act," Brownback said. (This section prohibits U.S. bilateral aid to Azerbaijan.) "Today narrowly-focused political interests won the day on this provision, but the fight is not over. This is too important to America. The U.S. should not be choosing sides in age-old conflicts around the world when both countries involved are of vital importance to the United States. I will continue this fight to level the playing field and to see *U.S.* national interests prevail," Brownback said.